

Meeting Minutes
Harbor & Waterfront Committee, Harpswell, Maine
September 13, 2017

Attending:

Members: *Present:* Burr Taylor – Chair, Mose Price, Philip Conner, Bill Saxton and Jack Dostie
Absent: Peter Darling
Harbormaster: Paul Plummer

Activities:

- Meeting called to order at 4:56 pm
- The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and accepted
- Burr Taylor announced that members of the Committee have been invited to meet with the Selectmen on October 12, 2017 at 6:00 pm to report on the Committee's work.
- Mose Price announced that the Mitchel Field Committee is forming a task force to review and update the master plan. He volunteered to represent the H&W Committee on the task force and the Committee agreed.

Harbormaster Report:

- Paul Plummer reported that there were three water-related incidences in August requiring his help. All ended favorably.
- An abandoned boat originating from Kennebunk washed up on Turnip Island. The owner is aware and attempting to salvage it. It will likely stay there for some time due to its location and the number of ledges impeding the removal.
- Paul and the Freeport Harbormaster were patrolling the waters were boaters collect to watch the Great State of Maine Air Show. Their presence helped curb some of the usual rowdy behavior that has happened in the past.
- A sign stating the 30-minute tie-up limit has been posted at the Town dock in Potts Harbor. Paul noted that the float and ramp were misaligned. Likely the result of an accident or misuse causing the dislocation of one of the moorings.
- Burr Taylor asked if Paul had any information on the parking requirements other towns have when permitting rental slips or moorings. There was a general discussion of Article 8.1.8 of the Ordinance and how it effects Harpswell businesses. Most found the language requiring one parking space per rental mooring or slip to be too restrictive. The Committee agreed that more research is required to continue the discussion on this topic.

Other Committees:

Marine resources

- Paul Plummer reported that DMR is redefining the intertidal zone with the purpose of extending the reach of the low-water limit. Moorings located in the intertidal area are not regulated.

Old Business:

Mooring Issues

- Paul presented the Committee with a draft of the mooring application. The draft was favorably reviewed and there were minor edits suggested. Current mooring holders will not have the opportunity to use the new mooring application. The Committee discussed the possibility of requiring a periodical reapplication for all mooring holders as a way of updating file information.
- There was a discussion of the fee structure and how the fees are handled. Reportedly, the fees are put in the general fund and there is some uncertainty on how they are accounted for. Fees should be used to pay for the Harbormaster's salary, boat and equipment. The Committee needs to know what the annual revenue from mooring fees is relative to the annual expenses for that department.
- A question on the applicability of the current fee structure for moorings that are accessed from the Potts Harbor dock was raised. Mooring holders using the dock reap the benefits of having a well-maintained and seaworthy dock at their disposal at no extra charge. The Committee will explore the possibility of a surcharge for those moorings.

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Mooring Inspection

- The Committee feels that mooring inspections are the responsibility of the mooring holder and the Town should only suggest regular inspections and avoid liability.

Harbor Study

- The Committee recommended that the Town explore the possibility of hiring an engineering firm to assess the major harbors current mooring placements and provide suggestions for reconfiguration in order to maximize the available space. Paul Plummer will begin researching potential firm once he has completed mapping the existing moorings.

Ordinance Changes

- Language changes regarding the return to permit stickers.
- Introduction of the mooring descriptions and fee schedule.
- A statement indicating that the Town will not be liable for any adverse actions on the suitability of mooring gear or placements.
- A review of the current parking restrictions associated with rental moorings and slips.

New Business:

Haul-outs

- The Committee reviewed the current situation regarding haul-outs. It was determined that haul-outs should be treated in the same manner as moorings. There should be an application, review and approval process, but not necessarily a fee. Haul-outs must not interfere with neighboring riparian right. Haul-outs that are not registered may be subject to a fine. It was suggested that haul-outs be required to display a unique identifying flag or buoy in order to warn boaters of their presence

Special Anchorages

- Paul identified Harpswell's special anchorages as; Basin Cove, Beal's Cove, Harpswell Sound, Mackerel Cove and Stover's Cove. These areas allow boats under 65' to anchor without the mandatory anchor lights or horns. It is unlikely that the Committee will attempt any changes to the current anchoring situations.

Future Discussions

- Parking requirements – Burr Taylor will seek advice from the Town Planner on what should be the appropriate parking requirements for rental mooring or slips.
- Abandoned moorings

Adjourned – 6:56 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Dostie

Next Meeting:

October 11, 2017 - Wednesday @ 5:00 pm – Harpswell Town Office